



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



**TO:** Connecticut Educators

**FROM:** Joseph Di Garbo, Connecticut's Teacher Involvement Coordinator

**DATE:** April 30, 2014

**SUBJECT:** Smarter Balanced In-Person Panel for Setting Achievement Levels Opportunity

The Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium is developing a common assessment system for mathematics and English language arts/Literacy aligned to the Common Core State Standards to ensure all students are prepared for college and/or career. On behalf of the Connecticut State Department of Education and Smarter Balanced, CTB/McGraw-Hill invites qualified educators and administrators to participate in an In-Person Panel for setting the achievement levels for the assessments. This process is often referred to as "standard setting."

The purpose of the In-Person Panel is to determine common expectations for student readiness/proficiency on the Smarter Balanced assessments through a transparent, consensus-driven process with extensive input from educators. Participants in the panel will make recommendations about the minimum test scores they believe to be necessary for a student to be considered performing at each of the defined achievement levels on the Smarter Balanced assessments. Input from educators with rich teaching experience will be a key factor in setting achievement levels.

The process of setting achievement levels will rely on the professional judgment and experience of educators and administrators in order to develop performance standards that are rigorous, fair, and accurate. The recommendations will be based on Achievement-Level Descriptors written and approved by Smarter Balanced governing states last year, the claims and targets defined for each content area and grade level, as well as educators' expertise in their content area and experience with students.

Participants in this panel will not set the final operational scores. A Vertical Articulation Committee will make recommendations to the chief school officers in Smarter Balanced governing states using a variety of information sources. These sources will include the recommendations of the In-Person Panel, recommendations from an Online Panel which will engage in a similar – but less comprehensive – process as the In-Person Panel, and external assessment information. Acceptance of recommended scores is subject to existing approval processes within individual states.

The In-Person Panel to determine achievement levels will take place October 13–19, 2014. Educators will participate in one of three segments of the panel based on their grade level and subject area expertise. The date of each segment can be found below:

### Key Dates for In-Person Panel

Activity	Start Date	End Date
High School English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics	October 13	October 15
Grades 6–8 English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics	October 15	October 17
Grades 3–5 English Language Arts/Literacy and Mathematics	October 17	October 19

Interested candidates may apply by accessing the [online application](#) to provide contact information, experience, and a statement of interest. Please complete the online application by Tuesday, May 13, 2014.

Smarter Balanced will select educators to serve as panelists from among the nominations submitted by Smarter Balanced states. The distribution of educators will represent a balance of states, grade levels, years of experience, and other relevant factors. A limited number of qualified educators from Connecticut will be selected to participate.

Smarter Balanced will pay for travel, lodging, meals, and other allowable expenses. Substitute reimbursement or a stipend may be provided as applicable. For additional information and answers to frequently asked questions, visit the Connecticut State Department of Education Web site ([www.ct.gov/sde/SmarterBalanced](http://www.ct.gov/sde/SmarterBalanced)) or contact me at 860-713-6863 or by e-mail at [Joe.DiGarbo@ct.gov](mailto:Joe.DiGarbo@ct.gov).